BRIEFLY DE
SCRIBING THE

Vertuous Reigne, and happy (though immature) Death of the most Mightie and renowmed Prince, King EDVVARD the sixth, King of England, France and IRELAND, &c.

WHO DIED IN THE

Sixteenth yeere of his age, and in the seuenth yeere of his Reigne.

Written by Sir IOHN CHEKE, *Knight,*

Anno 1553.

Neuer before publiſhed, but moſt worthy to be Read of all Eſtates in theſe our dayes.

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TO THE CONDIGNE PRAISE,
AND MEMORIAL OF THE THRISE NOBLE
AND MVCH HONOVRED LADY, THE
LADY BARBARA VICOVNTESSE L'ISLE;
THIS PRINCELY POEME BE
CONSECRATED;
BY HIM
VVHO VNFAINEDLY VVISH-
ETH VNTO HER LADYSHIP, AND
HER WORTHIEST FIRST-BORNE
DAVGHTER, THE LADY WROTH,
HEAVEN ON EARTH, AND
EVERLASTING HAPPINESSE IN
THE HIGHEST
HEAVEN.

A ROYALL ELEGIE, OF THE MOST NOBLE AND RIGHT EXCELLENT PRINCE KING EDWARD THE SIXTH.

WHen bitter Winter forced had the Sun,
Fro th'horned Goat to Piſces ward to run:
And liuely ſap that greeneth Gardens ſoot,
To flie the ſtocke to ſauc his Nource the root:
And ſtormie Chore that blow'th by North fro Eaſt,
Decayd the health and wealth of man and beaſt.
Th' Almightie minde that raigneth three in one,
Diſpoſing all things from his ſtable Throne;
Beheld the Earth, and man amongſt the reſt,
Mou'd by the crie of ſuch as were oppreſt,
But when he had the continent through view'd,
With Mawmetrie and Idoll blood embrew'd:

Where through his Law and Gospell were defil'd,
His Loue, his Aw, his worship quite exil'd.
He turn'd his face fro that so foule a sight,
And toward the Isles he cast his looke aright,
In hope that where Religion did abound,
He should some louelier sight haue quickly found;
But when he saw all sinnes most vile and naught,
Most rifely swarme where most his Word was taught:
In England chiefe which he of speciall grace,
Had chose to be his Church and Gospell place:
And had for that cause pour'd on it such store
Of wealthy gifts, as none could wish for more:
Ioyn'd with a King of such a godly mind,
As neuer erst he elsewhere had assign'd:
All woe and wrath he turn'd away his face,
And with him selfe he thus bewail'd our case;

"I haue look't so long vntill mine eyes do ake,
"In hope to see they should their sinnes forsake,
"To hide their mischieues waxing more and more,
"I haue wink't so long vntill mine eyes be sore.
"My throat is hoarse, my tongue hath lost the skin,
"Through feruent cries to fray them fro their sin.
"If gentle meanes might moue them to relent,

"What

" *What haue they wisht that hath not straight beene sent*
" *Sith then they passe for neither threats nor loue,*
" *Nor easie plagues, whereby I do them proue:*
" *What else remains but to confound them all,*
" *Both young and old the mightie with the small.*
CHRIST hearing this and moued with the teares
Of vertuous folke (for whose sake God forbeares
The wicked sort although their sinnes be great)
For his elect, began thus to intreat,

" *Deare Father, if iust Iustice should take place,*
" *I know it bootlesse now to sue for grace:*
" *But though their sins all measure do exceed,*
" *With-hold thy wrath, grant mercie yet at need:*
" *And sith through faith the better sort be mine,*
" *Giue leaue to weed and water once thy vine:*
" *That done, if so their fruits doe not amend,*
" *As barraine Brambles bring them to an end;*
When this our Sauiours mercifull request,
Was sunke into his Fathers heauie brest:
He neither graunted it nor yet deny'd,
But Father-like thus to his Sonne he sayd;

To sue for mercie I marualle what you meane,

For

For such a sort as do reiect vs cleane:
Behold the Heads, what els do they deuise
Saue vnder vs to cloke their couetise,
Thine heritage, they haue the whole bereft,
Except thy shirt, lets see what haue they left.
They spoyle, they spill, they waste vpon their pride,
That which was giuen thy needy corps to hide.
Thy gold thy plate thy houses with the lands,
That were the poores are in the rich mens hands.
And thou lyest naked begging at their dores,
Whiles they consume thy substance with their whores.
And as for Law whereby men should haue right,
It's wholy rul'd by money and by might:
And where the rich the needie should relieue,
Their study is to begg'rie them to driue:
What Titles forge they falsely to their lands,
Vntill at length they wring them fro their hands:
How ioyne they house to house, how farme to farme,
And lease to lease, the silly poore to harme.
How raise they rents, what incomes, yea what fines,
Exact they still, though all the world repines:
How suffer they their graine to rot and hore,
To make things deere, when 'tis giue plentie store?
And where they brag they do our word aduance,

Haue

Haue not they ſpoyl'd or fleeſt all maintenance,
That thereto ſeru'd? what kind of Clergie land
Is free this day out of the Lay-mans hand?
What Gentleman, what Merchant, yea what Swaine,
Doth not, or may not part thereof retaine,
I cannot name the vileneſſe of the reſt,
So ſore my heart their robberie doth deteſt:
Is this the way our Honour to defend?
No, no, we ſeee right well what they intend:
I loath to thinke vpon their wicked liues,
How ill they keepe their duties to their wiues:
For what reſpect do they their mariage make,
Saue riches, Honour, or promotion ſake:
Alas how are our Orphanes bought and ſold.
Our widowes forc't to wed where they ne would,
What vow, what oath, what bond ſo ſtrongly knit,
Doth hold, if gaine may grow by breaking it:
And when my Preachers tell them ought hereof,
How vexe they them with many a threat and ſcoffe,
Which moueth ſuch, as do thy manhood ſpoyle,
And rob from thee the merite of thy toyle,
To hate thy word and count thy Prophets euill,
Wiſhing both it and them too at the Diuell.
Are theſe thy flocke: thy Vine canſt thou them call?

That steale thy lands, thy goods, thy glory and all?
When for these sins I sent them late the Sweat,
How low they croucht, how hard they did intreat,
What vowes they made, they would their liues amend.
Whereas it seemes they did nought lesse pretend
For I no sooner had withdrawne my curse,
But they immediately grew worse and worse,
For where they vow'd to flie and lay aside
Their auarice, their gluttonie and pride.
Haue not they rais'd their Rents and Marchandises,
And sweld their guts with daintie wine and spices,
And Idol-like with bossed silke and gold,
Arai'd their wiues and children young and old?
As for themselues, so gorgeously they tire,
As Gods Eterne, more like than earthly mire:
Shall wee then suffer so peruerse a Nation,
To skorne and mocke their God in such a fashion?
No sure my Son that were against all right,
Yet for thy sake I will not stroy them quite:
But for to proue them once at thy request,
Ile onely touch their King, and warne the rest,
T'amend their liues, if still they disobey,
Ile take their King, their comfort ioy and stay.
But if his death they cast eke at their heele,

Ile

Ile poure downe plagues till euery one do feele.
This said, he call'd his seruant Crazie Cold,
Whom th'Icy King kept prisoner fast in hold,
About the Poles where vnder he doth dwell,
In grisly darke like to most hideous hell.
In Caues and Rockes of Snow and frozen Ise,
That neuer thaw; and charg'd him in this wise.

About three clymates henceward to the South,
Betweene the maine-land and the Ocean mouth,
Two Ilands lie skarce distant twentie mile,
Of which the larger and the Eastward Ile,
Cal'd Britannie, vntill the peoples sin,
Draue forth themselues and brought strange Nations in,
Is now diuided into portions three:
And in the same as many peoples bee,
Of whom the best and ciuil-like to sight
(But worst indeed) the English Nation hight.
And they dwell in the South part of the land,
Fro-th'mids whereof, thou shalt well vnderstand,
A Riuer runneth Eastward to the maine
Sea-arme, that parteth it and France in twaine
About this Riuer many stately Towers,
Are brauely built with Castles and with Bowers.

Wherein the King and Princes commonly,
In VVinter time with their whole houſholds lie.
To one of theſe I will thou hie in poſt,
To that I meane whereas the King is moſt.
I thought to bid thee marke the great reſort,
But do not ſo, for others beare a port,
As great as he; and greater otherwhile:
But marke well this, it will thee not beguile;
The mournefull cheare of many a Sutors face,
Will ſhew thee ſure which is his biding place.
And when thou haſt his houſe, and perſon found,
Y will thou ſhalt his healthy Corps vnſound.
But ſee thou hurt him not vnto the death,
Thou ſhalt but ſtop his wind-pipe: that his breath
Conſtrain'd, may cauſe the Cough riſe in his breſt,
Elſe what ſhall cure or remedie the reſt.

But in this feat I charge thee, ſee thou looke,
Thou harme him not whiles he is at his booke,
Or other kind of honeſt exerciſe,
Nor yet at Game, ſo it be void of vice.
But if this VVinter time thou maieſt him marke,
To ride all day full arm'd about the Parke,
Or elſe at Dice, or Tennis out of time,

Tore-

T'ore watch or toyle himselfe, for such a crime,
Strike hardily, but not too hard I say,
This is thy charge, about it, goe thy way.

Skarce was this errand throughly to him told,
But forth did come this shiuering crazie cold:
VVith Isickles be bristled like a Beare,
VVhich stucke about his head instead of haire.
His skin was hard made all of glaßie Ice,
Couered with hoary frost like grayish frize,
His armes and legs to keepe him warme, I trow,
VVere plated ore with fleakes of frozen snow.
And from his mouth there steam'd a breath so hot,
As could touch nothing, it congealed not.
But when he had arrous'd himselfe awhile,
And stretch't his ioynts as stiffe as any stile,
Because he would his charge no longer slacke,
He got him vp on blustring Boreas backe.
And forth he went, his horse so heauie troad,
That all the world may know what way he road:
For in his path there grew no kind of greene,
That could in long time after well beseene.
His breath and blustring was so sharpe and shrill,
That flouds for feare congealed and stood still.

The Holts, the Heaths, the Hils became all gray,
The Trees did shrinke, so great was their affray:
The frozen sheepe shooke feeding neere to fold,
While clunsey shepheard blew his nailes for cold.
Wild beasts, and foules, more fearefull than the mouse,
Forsooke the woods, and tamely came to house.

When this fell horseman with his greisly steed,
Had passed Ysland and made forth such speed:
That many Scots bad, Foule-ill ta the Carle,
That slew their sheepe and Cattle with his wharle:
He passed Yorke, and came to London straight,
And there he light to giue his horse a baite,
Where, ere he had three dayes in stable stood,
He eat so much, the poore could get no wood,
Except they would pay after double prise,
For Billet treble vnder common size.

But crazie Cold watcht all this while at Court,
To spie a time when he the King might hurt,
For when he saw him in a morning sweat,
And call for drinke to coole his Tenis heat,
He closely crept and hid him in the cup:
And when the King (alas) had drunke him vp,

Straight

Straight to his ſtomacke downeward he him got:
And there perceiuing all the intrails hot.
And that each member greedily did plucke,
To helpe it ſelfe, all ſuccour it could ſucke:
He mark't the food that went vnto the lungs,
And ſtiely mixt his vigour there-amongs,
That cooling it, ſo ſtopt the pipes therewith,
As to diſſolue it; Nature had no pith.

That done, to London ſtraight from Court he came,
And there infected diuers with the ſame,
Whereof the moſt part who were charely tended,
Recouered well, and throughly are amended,
But ſome whoſe Nature Phyſicke ouerpreſt,
Are gone to God and ſleepe in quiet reſt.

When crazie cold this cruell feat had wrought,
He tooke his Steed that had him hither brought,
And forth he rode to him that ſent him hither,
And ſo forth home, or elſe I wote not whither.

Straight after this within a day or twaine,
The King being ſicke did of his breſt complaine,
The cold congeal'd that in his Lungs lay raw,

Did

Did ſtop the pipes through which the wind ſhould draw,
By-meanes whereof his ſtomacke waxed faint,
Till Nature, help'd through Phyſicall conſtraint
Did make a way by purging part thereof,
Where through enſu'd a ſhrewd and vehement cough,
With reaching oft as if the heart ſhould breake,
Which made the vitall power and bloud grow weake,
For helpe whereof Phyſitians did repaire,
And thought it beſt to keepe him from the aire.
But when his Grace had long beene lack't abroad,
His Louers mourn'd, the Preachers layd on load,
Who knowing the Prince was plagued for our ſin,
Did warne vs daily amendment to begin,
With threats from God, if now we linger time,
His Grace ſhould die, and all we beare the crime.
And after his death ſuch worthy plagues enſue,
As all ſhould feele, and then too late might rue.
The Magiſtrate was plainely told his fault,
The man of Law, was warned not to hault.
Requeſt was made the Church-goods to reſtore,
Or put to th'vſes they were giuen for,
Leaſe-mungers, Land-lords, ſuch as raiſed rent,
Were mou'd t'abate their Lands to ancient ſtent.
The waſt of fare, the vainneſſe of attire,

Extortion,

Extortion, Malice, couetous deſire;
All Papiſtrie and fruitleſſe Goſpel-boaſt,
Was cry'd againſt, and damn'd as wicked moſt,
And finally fro the loweſt to the higheſt:
All were deſir'd to loue the Law of Chriſt:
With threats too true from God the liuing Lord,
In whoſe iuſt eye all ſin is ſore abhor'd:
That if we would not theſe our ſins repent,
Our King ſhould die and we too late lament.
But yet, alas, how were theſe Prophets heard,
The heads withdrew from hearing all afraid,
Leſt ſome good motion might corrupt their mind:
By whoſe example the people nought by kind,
Tooke hart-of-grace the Preachers to deſpiſe;
With ſlaundrous words and ſhameleſſe forged lies;
Gods bitter threats they made a very mocke,
His Preachers too a common ieſting ſtocke:
As for amendment, none at all was ſeene,
But into worſe all ils were turned cleane:
When God had ſuffred all theſe things a ſpace,
And ſaw at laſt how all refus'd his grace:
And that no threats might cauſe them to retire,
To ſtay the ſtroke of his conſuming ire:
He ſtraight decreed to take the guiltleſſe child,

For ſpeed whereof he vtterly exil'd
All meanes whereby he might recouer force,
And did permit all things to harme his co'ſe.

Then grew his griefe, his fleſh began to ſwell,
And long he lay in pangs like to the hell:
Till at the laſt God, pitying the paine,
Wherein ſo long the Innocent had laine.
Which eke he knew quite deſtitute of aide,
Did call for Death, and thus to him he ſaide;

Diſpatch at once, to Greenwich *ſee thou hie;*
Whereas my ſeruant EDVVARD *now doth lie.*
In paineſull pangs which he hath long beene in,
Not for his owne, but for his peoples ſin.
Enforce thine Arme and with thy piercing dart,
Deuide in twaine that godly piteous heart:
What weep'ſt thou Death? ceaſe foole, and hold thy tong,
What though he be ſo beautifull and yong;
So godly a Prince, ſo manly and ſo meeke,
As neuer Kingdome yet hath had his like:
He is too good for that vngodly Realme,
Wherefore I ſay, go ſtrike the ſtroke extreame:
Take no compaſſion on his tender youth,

His

His wit, his Learning, nor his loue to truth:
But wot'ſt thou what, let not thy forme be ſuch
An ougly ſhape as to the worldly rich.
It oft appeares, but pleaſant as it is
To ſuch as long for euerlaſting bliſſe:
With louely ſhape and ſmiling cheare I ſay,
Goe fetch my King, haue-done and goe thy way:

When doleſull death had heard this hard deuiſe,
He trim'd himſelfe in his moſt godly guiſe,
Like Mercurie in euery kind of grace,
Saue that he had a much more louely face:
And forth he flew till he came to the bed,
Whereas this Prince lay neither quicke nor dead.
But in a trance, for why his deadly griefe,
With nature ſtroue to proue, who ſhould be chiefe,
But when weake Nature had conſum'd her beſt,
She yeelded ſtreight and ſo the ſtruggle ceaſt.
Whereby the King came to himſelfe againe,
And ſeeing Death he turn'd away amaine.
For why? his youth and yet vnflowred breath,
Could not conſent to ſo vnripe a Death.

Drie Death it ſelfe with pitie moued thoe,

Had such a do to hide his inward woe.
But seeing the louely Prince was so afraid,
With smiling cheere to comfort him he said:
Be loud of God abash not but assent,
For God th' Almightie hath me to you sent:
Who ruing sore your griefe and wofull case,
Would haue you come to solace with his grace,
In ioy, and blisse and euerlasting glorie,
From earthly things all vile and transitorie:
From this your state vncertaine and vnsure,
Vnto a Reigne that shall for aye endure:
No sooner had our Soueraigne heard of this,
But that his spirit that much had long'd for blis,
Would needs away; howbeit his carefull mind,
For this his Realme which he must leaue behind,
Enforc't his Grace to pray Death stay awhile:
To th'end he might himselfe both reconcile
To God the Lord, and also recommend,
His Realme to him, for euer to defend,
And while that Death for this cause gladly stay'd,
He sat him vp and thus deuoutly pray'd.

HAue mercy on me Father deere, thou Lord and God of truth,
O let thy mercy hide the sins and frailety of my youth:

I haue

I haue transgrest thy Law too oft, full wo is me therefore:
But for thy Son my Sauiours sake to mercy me restore.

My flesh doth craue to keepe the life, full loth to leaue the light,
But Lord do thou as shall seeme best in thy Almighty sight.
(whelme,
And when thou shalt receiue my soule which griefes now ouer-
Be mercifull, most mercifull, to this my silly Realme.

Preserue thy truth, maintaine thy word, poure plenty of thy grace
On all their hearts whom thou shalt set to gouerne in my place.

Thus Lord I render to thy hands my selfe, my flocke, my seat,
Do with them all as thou think'st best, for Christs sake I intreat.

AMEN (quoth death) and with his deadly dart
Clane streight in twaine his feruent praying heart.
But Lord how glad the Ghost was of the stroke?
For when he saw his prison gate was broke,
Fast forth he flew, and vp to beauen went
To rest with Christ in ioy's that neuer stent:
The dying body round about did sprall,
While they about him on the King did call,
A dawing him as if he were in swound,
But all for nought, he had his mortall wound:
And when the bloud which would haue holpe the hart,
Had stifled it, and left each other part:
Then wax't his face and hands all pale and wan.
And when the bloudlesse parts to coole began,

To heauen ward his hand and eyes he caſt,
Downe fell his Jaw, his heart-ſtrings all to braſt:

Thus dy'd this King, this guiltleſſe bleſſed child,
In body and Soule a Virgine vndefil'd:
The ſixteenth yeere of his vnperfect age:
VVo worth vs men whoſe ſins let run at rage,
Haue murdred him, wo worth vs wretches all,
On whom the wreake of righteous bloud muſt fall,
VVo worth our ſins for they alas haue ſlaine,
The Nobleſt Prince that euer yet did Raigne.

AN

AN EPITAPH OR DEATH DOLE, OF THE RIGHT

Excellent Prince, King EDWARD the sixth, who who died in the sixteenth yeere of his Age, and in the *seuenth yeere of his Reigne*; *and was Buried at* Westminster in the Tombe of his Grand-Father, the eighth of August. *Anno Dom.* 1553.

THe noble hart which feare could neuer moue,
In which a vertuous fraighted mind did rest,
The face whose cheere allured vnto loue,
All harts, through eyes, which pittie whole possest,
The braine which wit & wisdome made their chest,
Full stust with all good gifts that man may haue,
Rest with a Princely carcas here in graue.

The vertuous gifts commixed with the mind,
As godly feare, a zeale to further truth,
Such skill of tongues, and arts of euery kind,
With manhood, prudence, iustice ioynd with ruth,
As age seld hath, thogh here they greed with youth:
Are from their wemles vndefiled Ghost,
Gone hence to Heauen with the godly host:

Of

Of which two parts faſt link't in bonds of life,
It pleas'd the Lord to lend vs late a King:
But out, alas, our ſins they were ſo rife,
And we ſo worthleſſe of ſo good a thing,
That *Atropos* did cut in twaine the ſtring,
Long ere her ſiſters ſixteene wharles had ſpun,
Or we the gaine of ſeuen yeres Raigne throgh wun.

VVo worth our ſins, our ſins, our ſins I ſay,
The wreake of them hath reft vs ſuch an one,
As neuer Realme the like recouer may,
A peereleſſe Prince, a Phœnix bird alone:
Ah well is he, but we full wo begon,
Our wicked liues haue loſt this guiltleſſe guide,
VVhoſe ghoſt the heauē, whoſe corſe this herſe doth (hide.

FINIS.

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